

Sister Michaela Hedican

Prioress from 2011–2017



Sister Michaela (Michelle) Hedican was born in Virginia, Minn., on September 4, 1945, the second of five children born to Robert and Marjorie Ann Govin Hedican. She attended the Benedictine-staffed Regis High School in Eau Claire, Wis., and joined the sisters of Saint Bede Priory during her senior year of high school. She entered Saint Bede Priory on September 28, 1962, and made her first profession on July 11, 1964, and her perpetual profession on July 11, 1967. Sister Michaela is a graduate of the College of Saint Scholastica, Duluth, Minn., and holds two master's degrees, one in religious education from Seattle University and the other in theology from Saint John's University School of Theology.

As a member of Saint Bede Priory, Sister Michaela was an elementary and junior high teacher, mainly in the subject areas of science and religion. She served her community as vocation director and novice director from 1974–1979. For a number of years, Sister Michaela ministered at the Saint Bede Priory Center in retreat ministry and parish outreach. She became the associate director of the Center, and then the director, a role she fulfilled from 1987–1997. Following her ministry at the Center, she became the unit coordinator for the Saint Bede sisters living at the Chippewa Falls, Wis., nursing home.

In 2003, Sister Michaela was elected president of the Federation of St. Benedict and in 2008 was elected prioress of Saint Bede Monastery, Eau Claire, Wis. She served as prioress until the Saint Bede community merged with Saint Benedict's Monastery in August of 2010.

On February 27, 2011, Sister Michaela was elected the 16th prioress of Saint Benedict's Monastery, St. Joseph, Minn., and was installed on June 5, 2011. Among the emphases in her spiritual teaching as prioress was the spirituality of mercy, in observance and celebration of the Church's "Jubilee Year of Mercy" from December 2015 to December 2016.

During her years as prioress of Saint Benedict's Monastery, Sister Michaela played a significant role in all of the aspects of the Saint Bede sisters' transition to Saint Benedict's Monastery. Her own experience and that of the Saint Bede sisters eminently prepared her for the merger of Mount Benedict Monastery in Ogden, Utah, with Saint Benedict's Monastery in 2012.

Sister Michaela collaborated closely with President Mary Dana Hinton of the College of Saint Benedict in strategizing for the sisters' role in furthering one of the college's strategic directions for the year 2020—that of extending Catholic and Benedictine values in creating a vibrant and lived community experience for the students, faculty and staff of the college. After the completion of her term as prioress, Sister Michaela spent some sabbatical time at St. Paul's Monastery, St. Paul, Minn., and participated in a program for certification in spiritual direction in Tucson, Ariz.

